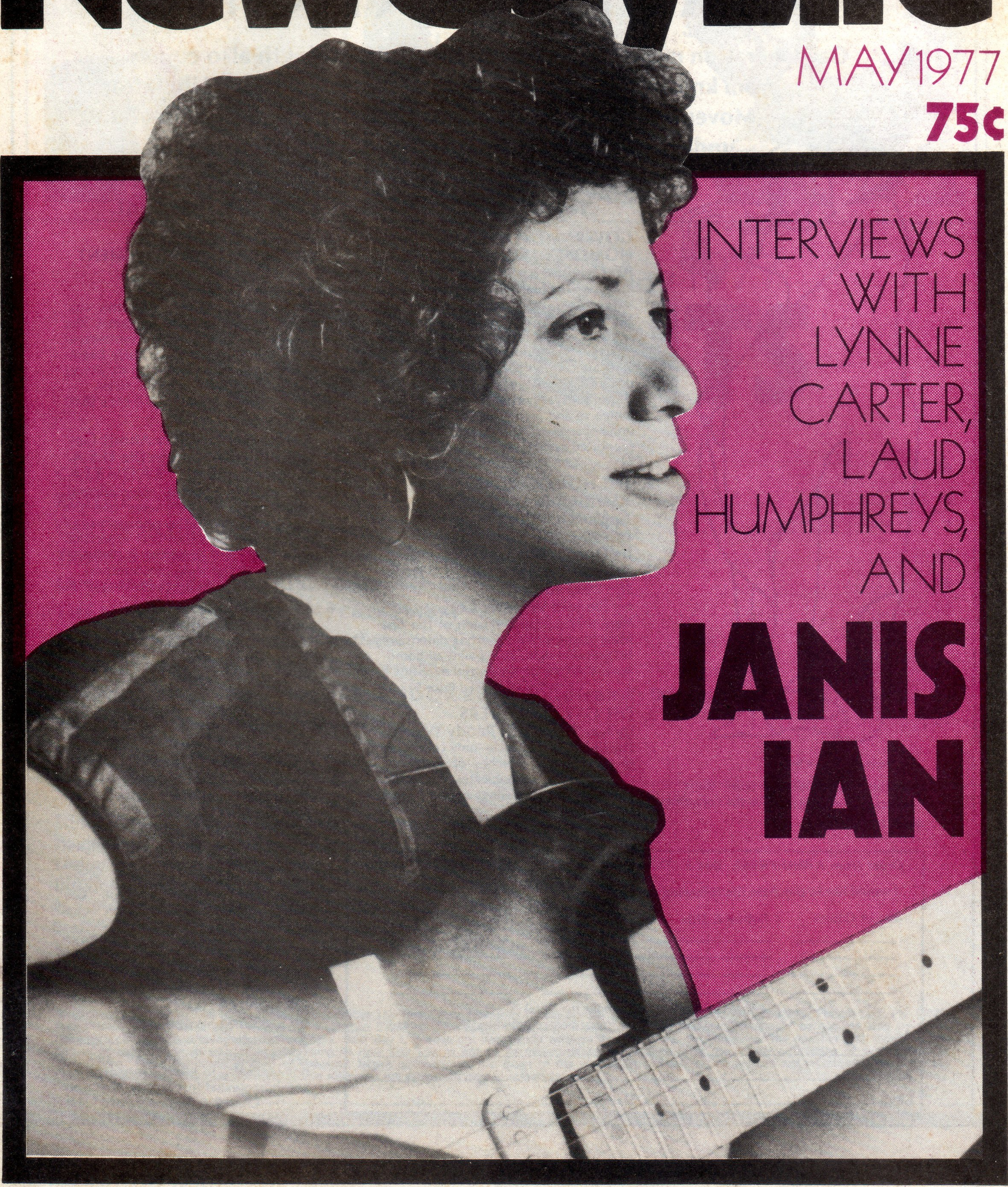


NewGayLife

MAY 1977

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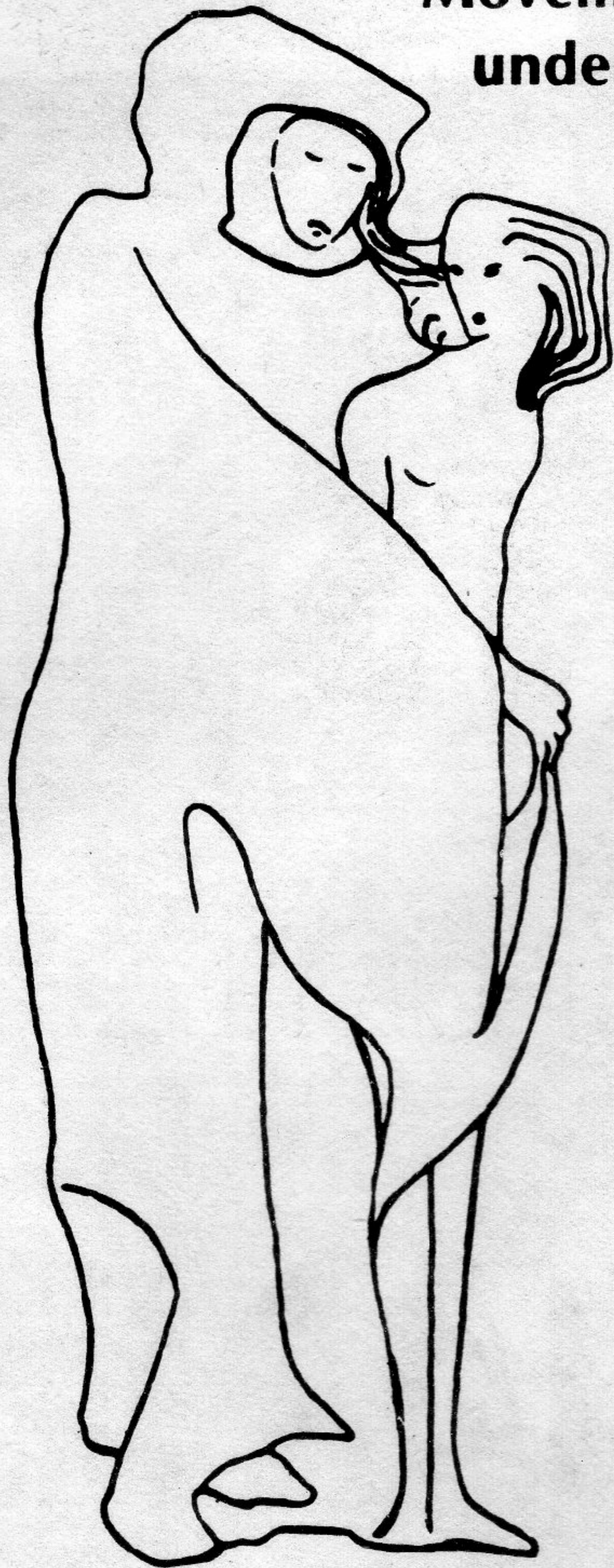
INTERVIEWS
WITH
LYNNE
CARTER,
LAUD
HUMPHREYS,
AND

**JANIS
IAN**

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Volume 1, Number 2, May 1977

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UNITED STATES PENITENTIARY
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30315

April 6, 1977

New Gay Life
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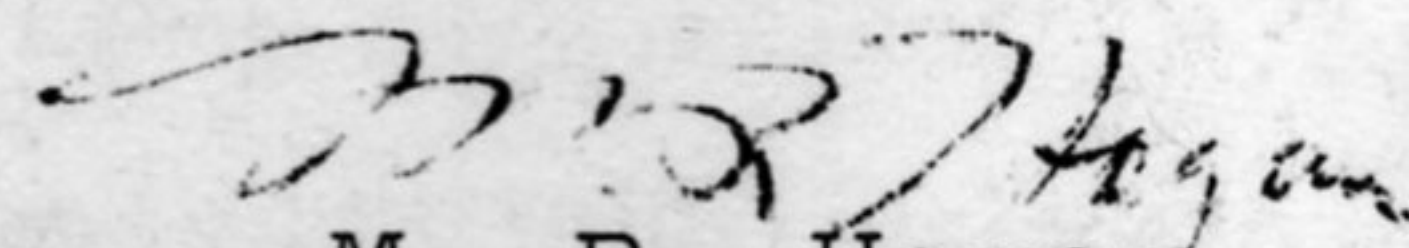
Gentlemen:

A copy of the book New Gay Life, mailed to inmate Russell J. Spear, (Reg. No. 00752-158) will stimulate homosexual desires; thus creating a threat to the discipline, good order and security of this institution. Homosexuality is definitely a problem in an institution such as ours. This publication is not approved for delivery to the inmates in this institution, as one of our efforts to protect the rights of inmates who do not choose to participate in homosexual activities.

The book will be retained at this facility for approximately thirty (30) days, to allow adequate time for an appeal. Should my original decision be sustained through the appeal process and/or you choose not to appeal, this publication will be returned.

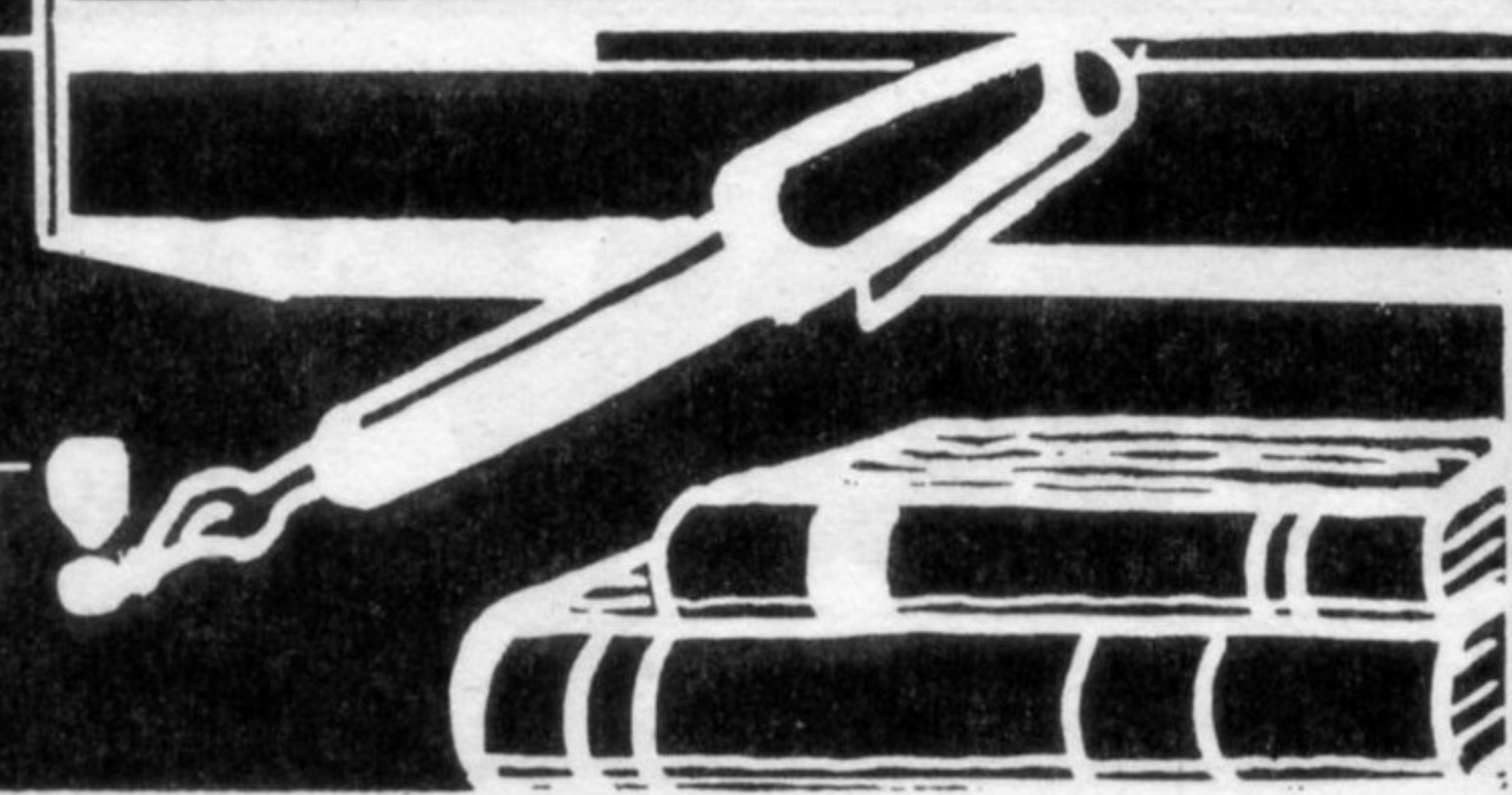
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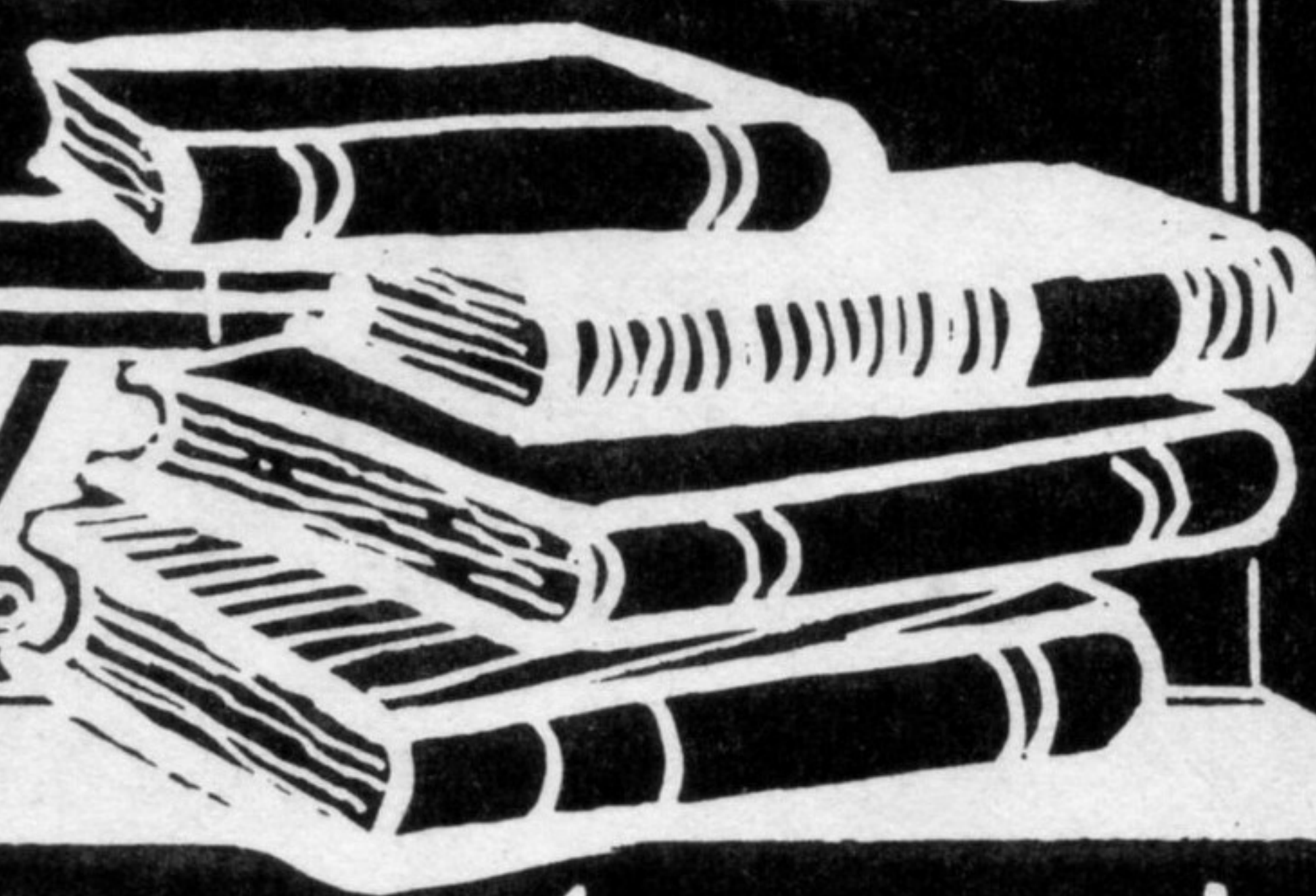
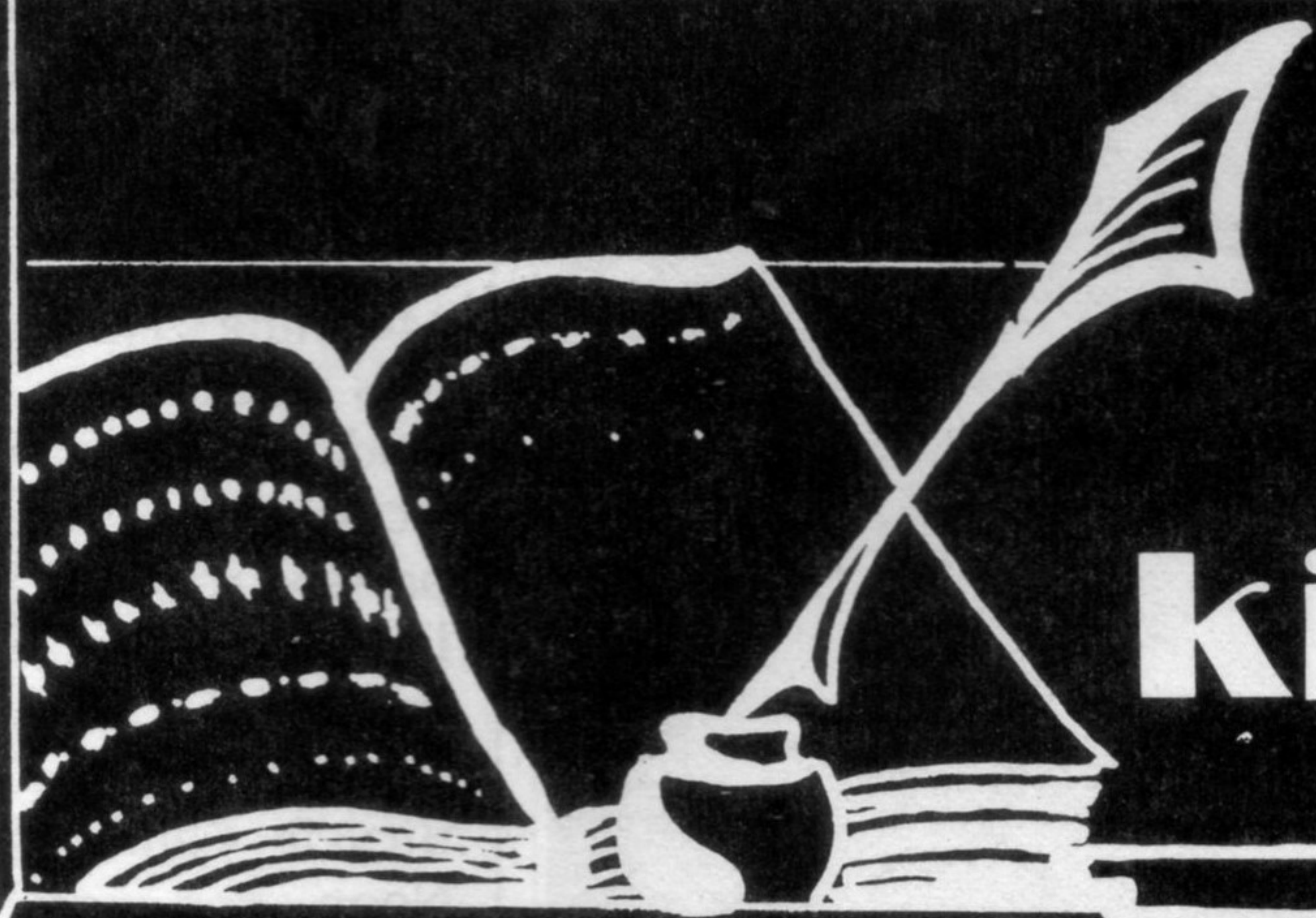
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May

May 1 - Phila. Gay Bicycle Club. Ride to Morris Arboretum. Leave from the Art Museum at 10:00 (Weather Permitting). For more information call 928-1919.

May 6 - Ron Bluestein on dulcimer at Phila. Gay Coffeehouse (Evening)

May 12 - Painted Bride Art Gallery Benefit. Spring Mountain Winery, 604 S. 2nd St., 7:00 P.M. Donation - \$10.00

May 12 - MCC outing to the Phillies. Call 763-5069 for more information.

May 13 - Tom Bledsoe, dramatic readings at the Phila. Gay Coffeehouse (Evening)

May 15 - Gays of the Northeast meeting, Frankford Friends Meetinghouse, 2:00 P.M. Call Switchboard for more information.

May 15 - MCC Brunch, call 877-3384 for information.

May 15 - Hank Baron, folksinger and songwriter, Phila. Gay Coffeehouse (Sunday evening)

May 20 - Karl Tricomi, concert pianist. Phila. Gay Coffeehouse (Evening)

May 20-22 - MCC Northeast District Conference, Brooklyn, N.Y. Call 922-6381 for information.

May 21 - A Comedy in Six Unnatural Acts (Film). Loving satire of various stereotypes of Lesbians.

Christopher Strong (Film). Katherine Hepburn in her first starring performance in movies. Gay Community Center of Phila. (GCCP) 8:00 and 10:00 P.M. Admission - \$1.75

May 21 - Phila. Gay Bicycle Club, Lower Main Line Ride. Leave from the Falls Bridge at East River Drive, 11:00. Picnic in Flat Rock Park (Raindate: Sunday, May 22)

May 21 - Women's Dance (GCCP) Benefit for Susan Sax Defense Fund. 9:00 - 1:00 A.M. Admission - \$2.00 - Beer, Soda, etc.

May 22 - Thank You, Masked Man (Film). An animated Lenny Bruce routine.



Entertainment at Phila. Gay Coffeehouse

Victim (Film). A gay lawyer jeopardizes his reputation by helping police capture blackmailer who preys on homosexuals. (GCCP) 7:30 and 9:30 P.M. Admission - \$1.75

May 22 - People's Fund Festival, International House, 3701 Chestnut St., 3:00 - 11:00 P.M. Admission - \$2.00

May 23 - Kathy and Barbara. A night of poetry and song at Alexandria Books, 328 S. 17th St. - Admission - \$.50.

May 27 - Peggy Bernstein and Ian Mishkin, folksingers. Phila. Gay Coffeehouse (Evening)

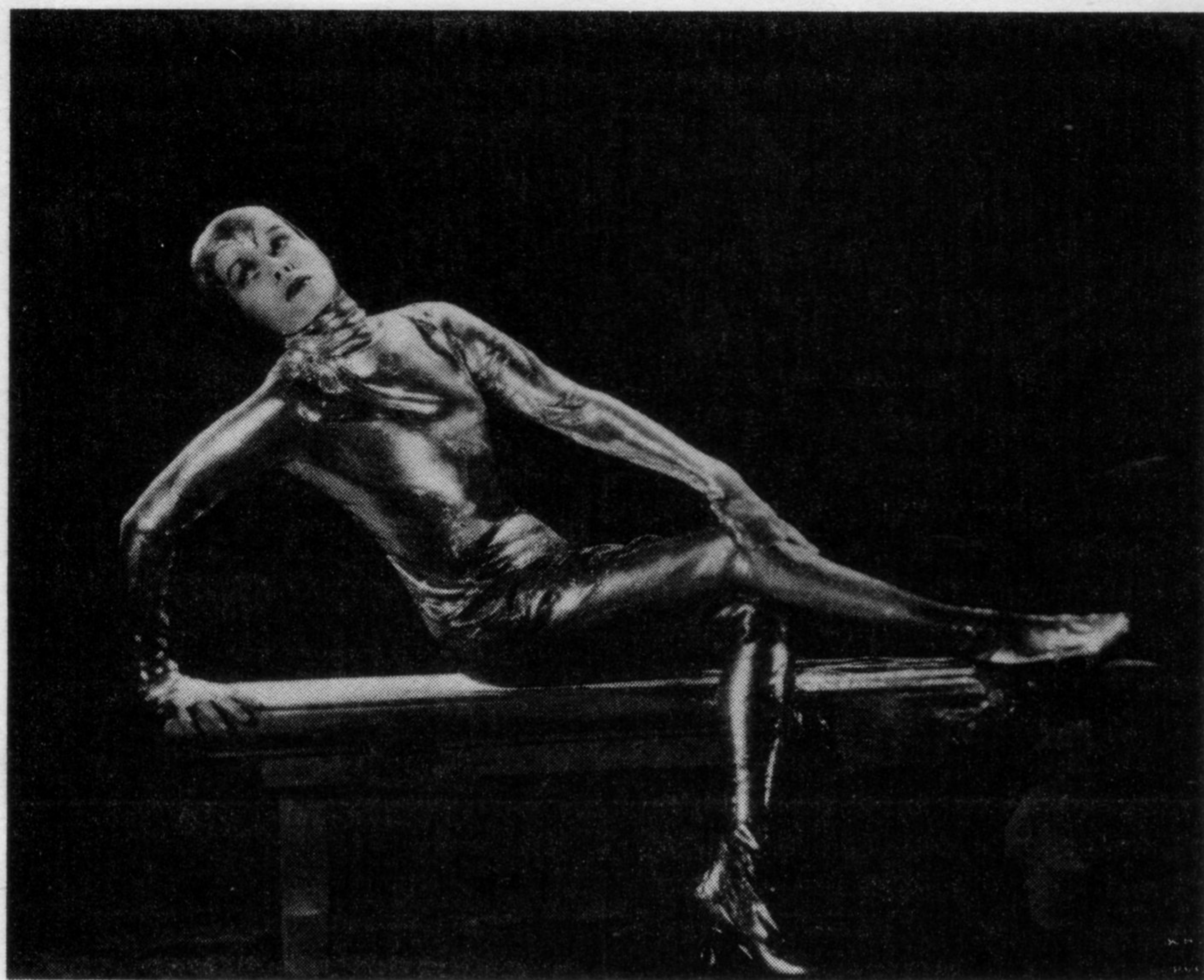
May 28 - Emerging Women (Film). History of women in U.S. Sandy and Madeline's Family (Film). The feelings of a Lesbian couple.

Update by a speaker from Custody Action for Lesbian Mothers on the present state of Sandy and Madeline's on-going case (GCCP) 8:00 and 10:00 P.M. Admission - \$1.75

May 28 - Phila. Gay Bicycle Club, Bicycle Clinic 9:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon. For more information call Gay Switchboard.

May 29 - Scorpio Rising (Film). Classic American underground movie. Nudes, A Sketchbook (Film). Series of explicitly sexual interpretations.

The Places Between Our Bodies (Film). Exploration of gay male sexuality. 7:30 and 9:30 P.M. (BCCP) Admission - \$1.75



Katherine Hepburn in CHRISTOPHER STRONG at GCCP

REGULAR EVENTS

MONDAY

- 8 PM GAY ALLIANCE OF PRINCETON, 128 Nassau St., Princeton, N.J.
- 8 PM MCC Bowling, 18th & Market Sts.
- 8 PM GAYS AT PENN, 3601 Locust Walk (Christian Assn., U of P)
- 8:30 PM GAY ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, call LO7-0100

TUESDAY

- 8 PM Single Gay Men's CR Group
Gay Community Center,
326 Kater St. (4th below South)

WEDNESDAY

- 7:30 PM GAY WOMEN'S CR GROUP
Gay Community Center,
326 Kater St.
- 1:30-4 PM GAY STUDENTS AT TEMPLE, Rm. 309, Student Activities Center, 13th & Montgomery ave.
- 7 PM MCC LITURGY, 250 South 12th St.
- 8 PM MCC Bible Study, 250 S. 12th St.
- 8 PM INTEGRITY (GAY EPISCOPALIANS), St. Mary's, 39th & Locust Walk (U of P), SH8-2118
- 8:30 PM BI GAY MARRIED MEN'S GROUP, 326 Kater St.
- 7:30 PM GAY WOMEN'S ALTERNATIVE (women over 30 social-cultural group) call (evenings) 642-4348 or KI5-6284 (1st & 3rd Wed. of month)

THURSDAY

- 7:30 PM MCC WOMEN'S RAP, call 567-7730 or 928-1919
- 8 PM DIGNITY PRAYER GROUP, 250 S. 12th St., 425-4440
- 8:30 PM GAY AA, LO7-0100 (Meets at GCCP)

FRIDAY

- 3-6 PM GAYS AT PENN COFFEE-HOUR (See Monday 8 PM)
- 8:15 PM Beth Ahavah, Gay Synagogue, 1026 Pine St., #9 (2nd & 4th Fridays of mo.)
- 8:30 PM GAY AA, LO7-0100
- 9 PM to 1 AM GAY COFFEEHOUSE, 326 Kater St., WOMEN AND MEN WELCOME (with entertainment)

continued on page 29

Editor's Space

"Coming Out." For some, it is a tired phrase - two words that have almost lost their meaning through overuse. Even so, those words usually have great significance for many of us.

Coming out is a long, slow process for most gays. It does not happen all in a day. Level after level is achieved. Stage upon stage is built. There is no single "coming out day" for anyone. But, there is a time which all of us can identify as the time when we "came out."

Probably, everyone can remember the thrill they felt when they reached the first stage in the coming out process - self-acceptance. When was it that you first knew about your gayness and accepted it?

For me it was one of the most happy times ever. Finally, I could be myself to myself. No more lies or illusions about who I was or what I wanted. I could be honest with myself at last.

My happiness level increased measureably.

Once a person embarks on this course it is difficult to turn back. It is not easy to live dishonestly with anyone once a person achieves an honest relationship with himself/herself.

A person who has come out to himself/herself and knows the joy of living honestly, naturally wants to share that joy with friends. So, another level is sought in the striving to come out.

Telling friends about one's gayness is perhaps one of the most difficult tasks a person can undertake. All kinds of fears crop up. But one is almost compelled to go on.

I can remember literally shaking like a leaf as I tried to tell some friends about my gayness. Once I

told them, however, I usually felt greatly relieved. None of these reactions was bad and so it made it easier to tell the next person.

Once this stage of "coming out" is achieved only caution, common sense and discretion can deter someone from coming out to everyone he/she meets. Parents, relatives, workmates and many others are some of the levels or stages that can be reached in the long process. But, not all of us can "come out" on every level. No one should feel guilty about not being totally "out."

Coming out on any level is a delicate matter. Only the person involved can make the determination about whether or not to come out to certain people. Some times it is not possible to come out in certain situations.

This is where oppression is most evident. Not being able to share one's life and loves with one's parents is painful and sad. Not being able to work at a job and be openly gay is sometimes very uncomfortable. Not being able to let everyone know about one's gayness is, many times, a frustrating experience.

All of us feel this frustration most acutely. It is not easy to stay hidden once the taste of freedom and honesty is had. But, each of us must make our own decisions on this matter. Only we can decide the best time and the right way in which to make such an announcement.

It is always exciting to tell someone about your gayness, because you are sharing with them a great part of yourself. And every time this sharing occurs, you renew in yourself that original thrill of your own self-acceptance.

Joseph R. DeMarco

An Interview With Lynne Carter By Tommi Avicoli

CARTER IN DRAG



As Betty Davis

There were tears slowly streaming down the edges of his eyes as he recounted the story — a woman from the Deborah Foundation had come to rehearsal that afternoon to inform him that they were underwriting the cost of the heart surgery he so desperately needs. The audience went wild with applause. This man on stage was more than Lynne Carter, comedienne. This man had, in the course of two hours at the Cafe Society in Philadelphia, become a personal friend.

Lynne Carter is best known throughout the country for his impressions of six women — Pearl Bailey, Bette Davis, Mae West, Marlene Dietrich, Hermione Gingold and Phyllis Diller. His is an art, elevated by the intensity of the imitations, and more — the fusion of soul into caricatures that, on their own, do no more than the wax museum figures of Madam Tussaud. Carter's genius is in his ability to become the people he impersonates, to give them a mind. He does not mimic, he invents. He takes the outer shell, and infuses it with a defiant sense of its own being. It's trite to say he's convincing, but he is convincing.



As Mae West

Female impersonation is not a new thing — not an invention of the so-called sexual revolution of the sixties. Instead, it dates back to Shakespearean times when the boys dressed in women's clothing to portray the female parts. Though this "drag" had its roots in misogyny (women were not permitted to be on stage), there is nothing misogynistic about Carter's routines. For in Carter's portrayal, these women are whole persons, driven by very real needs — such as the Bette Davis who, despite her callous exteriors, is really yearning to be loved and needed (and who isn't!). The same can be said of his drunk Marlene who sings, "Falling off stage again, what am I to do, can't help it."

Though all of his impressions are flawless, my favorite was Pearl Bailey. There is something naturally human about the woman, and Lynne captures every ounce of her warmth, her free-spirited attitude, and her sense of humor. It certainly shows that Pearl Bailey is a personal friend of his; in fact, as he revealed in the interview, she started him in the impression business. That he ends the show with the real Lynne

Carter coming out on stage without costume, only serves to demonstrate his ability to reach his audience at a level of authentic humanity seldom reached in such performances.

Lynne Carter was accompanied by two talented gentlemen named simply, "Company." Their introductions to Lynne's numbers were marvelously handled; they have the right combination of punch and talent to pull off even some of the bad lyrics. My favorite of their numbers was the song, "Star," which introduced Marlene.

Lynne Carter is someone who has to be seen; one can never understand the energy he generates except by experiencing it firsthand. He functions well on stage, maintains a steady rapport with his audience, and has as much fun doing it as we had watching him.

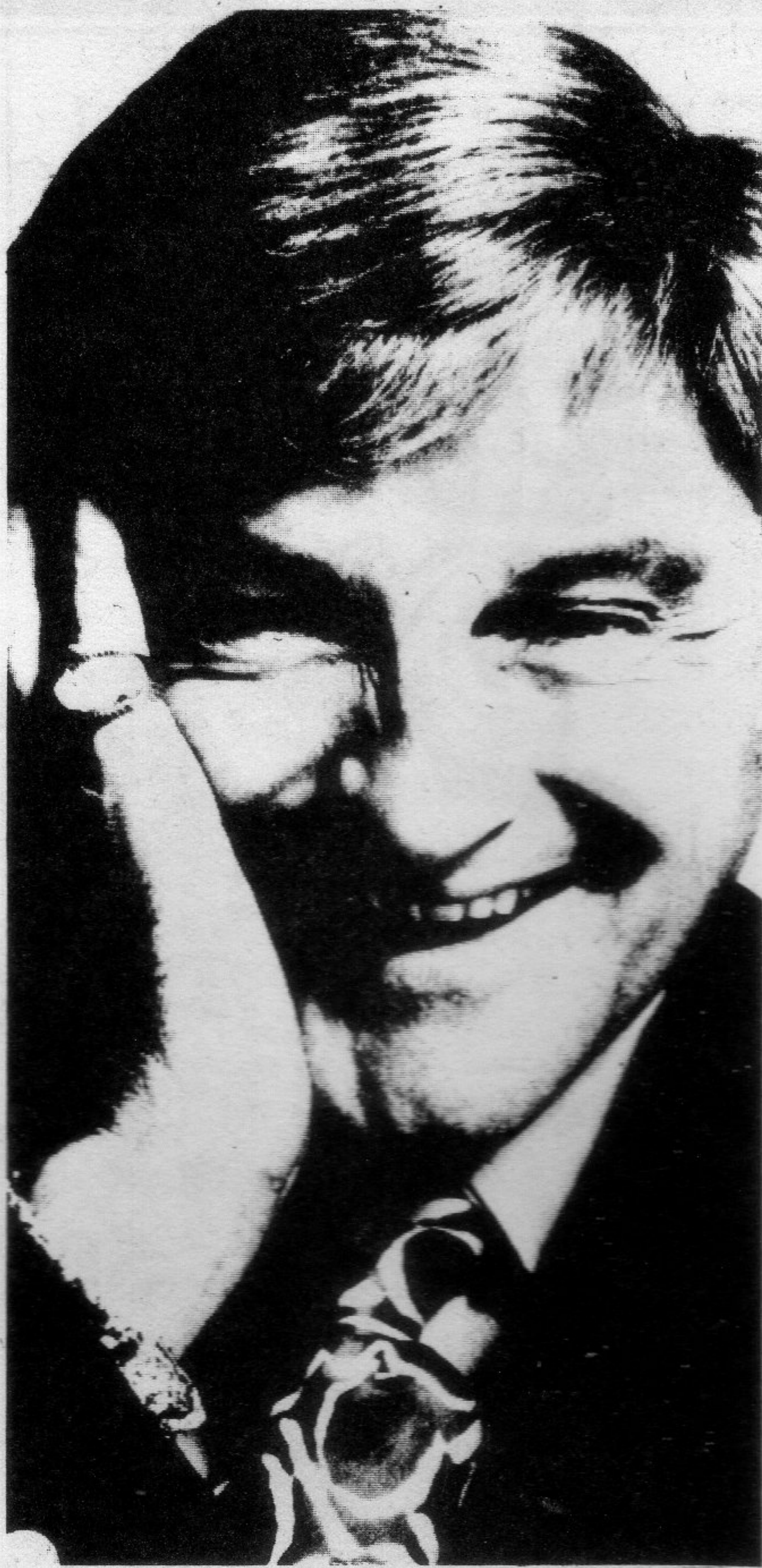
I spoke with Mr. Carter after his performance at the Cafe Society opening night. He was literally exhausted. Seeing the man so run down was distressing. Watching him on stage gave one the impression his energy output was inex-

haustible. But the strains of the heart attack he suffered in November were still visible, and despite my wanting to ask him a thousand and one questions, I refrained.

T: How did you get started?

L: Oh well, that happened by accident years ago. I went to a Halloween party . . . as Hildegard . . . she was, at that time, like Cher would be today . . . and I won the contest. I won the prize as the best person in costume and I was offered a job in a little club there. I didn't have anything else going. The kids I was with said take it, you're crazy, take it . . . So I took the job. (It) lasted 32 weeks.

Then I went to Chicago and that's where I met Pearl Bailey. I was working in a club . . . a terrible neighborhood, at Clark and Ohio, 25 girls and me, it was a strip joint. I was the only boy in the show. I thought, Oh God, when I get out on that stage, they're going to throw beer



Lynne Carter

bottles at me because y'know Pearl came in and I was doing a number that she had recorded . . . It wasn't one of her big numbers but it had a double (meaning). Of course at that time you couldn't say anything on a stage . . . she flipped . . . I didn't mean to imitate her but by listening to the record you learn the record . . . she flipped . . . and she gave me her musical arrangements and we became very close. She sort of took me under her wings. So when I say she started me in show business, I was working but not really doing anything . . . she taught me don't do this, do that, this is tasteful, that isn't.

She still writes to me, talks to me on the phone . . .

T: Do you ad-lib on stage?

L: Oh all the time. A lot of what you heard tonight was ad-libbing out of rough situations. When musical things go wrong I stop and I talk to the bank, I talk to

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the audience . . . it becomes fun for the audience, too, because they're kind of like in on it. People like to be in on it. They don't like to be left out. . . Like when I walk into the audience, (during the Pearl Bailey number) they love that. Cause they're right by the performer then. It makes everything come to life . . .

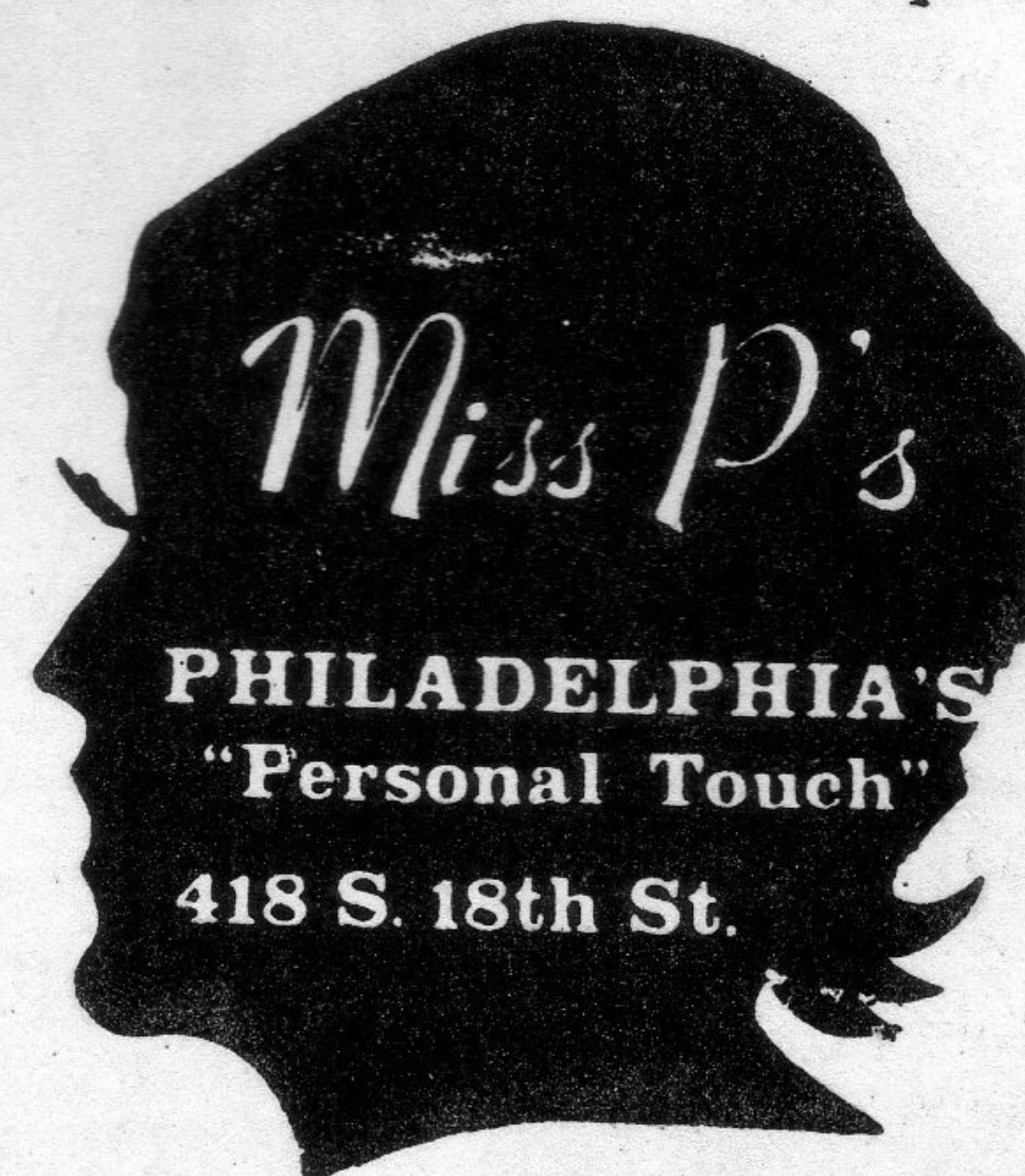
T: What kind of audiences do you generally get?

L: Everybody. I feel that you should play to everybody. I don't think we — a gay — want to be separated. So why should we limit. If we limit, then who's the bigot? If we play strictly to gays, then we're bigoted . . . If we wanna be taken into the mainstream, let's give to the mainstream of life. And I've always worked that way . . . I'm just a human being and I feel we have to get along in this world with each other and the best way to do it is to be honest and straightforward . . . and I think that,

when you do it that way, there's never really a hassel. I worked before there were gay organizations to stand up for your rights . . . no gay lib, I worked some places that would really make your hair stand on end, dear. And they accepted me. Cause I came in with an honesty. And if anybody would have cut me down, they would have killed them. They knew I was gay, they didn't care. But I was right with them, and I was real with them . . . I did my thing, that was my business. They did theirs, that was their business. We got along great. And so all my life I've always gone what I call down the middle of the road. On the stage I have gay lines for gay people, straight lines for straight people, and I have comedy which is universal, it plays to everybody. A funny thing is a funny thing. It doesn't matter whether you're gay or straight, pink, green or what. ●

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TEAROOM SYMPATHY

An Interview With Laud Humphreys

By Joseph R. DeMarco

Laud Humphreys is a noted sociologist who has done some major studies of gay life in the last few years. Among his numerous writings are *Tearoom Trade*, a study of tearoom behavior and *Out of the Closets*, an historical analysis of the Gay Liberation Movement. Talking to Mr. Humphreys is a pleasant experience.

Sitting in his hotel room at the New York Hilton, we covered many topics at length. Some of the subjects we discussed are included in this interview.

J.R.D.: Given the number of articles and books you have written on the subject of homosexuality, do you feel you have gotten enough institutional prestige at your school? Have you experienced any discrimination?

L.H.: I think I would have been held back by my area of research if it hadn't been for the good fortune of *TEAROOM Trade* winning the C. Wright Mills award. The research I did was so controversial and different that it achieved sort of instant recognition. I think the general subject (homosexuality) would have held me back. There are instances where I've tried for other jobs and discovered through inside sources that I was turned down because of attitudes such as "well we already have one person who is interested in *that!*" There is, I'm sure, a lot of sexism involved; and I'm sure a lot of homophobia involved. There has been prejudice and there have been remarks (about me).

J.R.D.: Do you think it is any easier now being an academic and out of the closet?

L.H.: Yes, I do, I think it is a little easier because there is a little fear beginning to develop of civil rights types of suits. It's easier primarily because now there are others who will give you support. If you are out you are not alone. It's the people who came out a few years ago that are the heroes. Now, there is support. But that doesn't mean it's a bed of roses.

J.R.D.: When and how did you come out yourself?

L.H.: Through a long slow process. I was very closeted

from the time I was 22 to the time I wrote *Out of the Closets*. Being married and with children and being an episcopal clergyman tended to hold me in the closet even the time I wanted to come out.

After I wrote *Tearoom Trade* however, I began speaking a lot to Gay Liberation Organizations. My wife and I both became very active in Gay Liberation although she's straight . . . sexually. We organized the first Gay Liberation Organization in St. Louis . . . we worked in Boston . . . then we moved to Albany and I was one of the founders of the Tri-Cities Gay Liberation front in Albany.

Then I would be asked to speak all over the country. In those years, when a speaker came in to talk about his research there was always someone in the back of the audience who would jump up and say, "Before we go any further, are you gay?" At first, I'd try to hedge, I'd say, "Sorry I'm not here to discuss my sexuality." Or "I'm bi-sexual." And that wasn't accepted very well either. I finally got to the point, even if my wife were sitting in the audience, when I'd say, "Sure I'm gay, but I'm also married."

So it was a gradual step by step thing. The real open pronouncement was at the Sociology Meeting in August 1974. There was a session on Theory which discussed homosexuality, in which Edward Sagarin presented, in my opinion, one of the most vicious papers I have heard attacking everybody from Kinsey on down, had done (homosexual) research. Really attacking us in unjustified terms. And I answered that attack. One of his attacks was that we're all writing as straights. So I got up and I said, "I beg your pardon, I've never said in anything that I've written that I'm straight. As a matter of fact, I am gay and I'm proud to be gay, but at least I'm an honest Sociologist." I said this with much fear. So that was greeted with a standing ovation. Afterwards, the dean of my school and his wife came up





and embraced me. It has come to be called, "Monday, Bloody Monday."

It was very tense, not the happiest situation. With that sort of announcement, it was out and I was out to my classes.

J.R.D.: Have you remained married?

L.H.: Yes, I'm still married . . . very happily married. And I love my wife very very much. We communicate better than most married couples that I know.

J.R.D.: Why did you decide to study gay life?

L.H.: It's really a strange thing. I was gay but that really wasn't the reason. My first semester in graduate school . . . going back to school after . . . ten years in the ministry, I had this course and we were to do a major paper . . . My professor . . . a really great woman . . . said I want you to get out of your Ivory tower and . . . into the world, and get your hands dirty . . . go study gay bars. What she didn't know . . . was that I had been a very activist priest in South Chicago and with a highly gay parish, in Chicago. I had been in the civil rights movement . . . than I went into the Peace Movement. I knew the gay world both as a person and with formal training as a minister . . . counseling gays.

So, I thought . . . she wants me to study gay bars, I'll study gay bars . . . I worked hard. She was impressed with the paper . . . (she) gave it to some professors . . . all of a sudden I had two professors come to me and say "this paper is terrific. Will you think about doing your dissertation on the subject . . . we can get you funding." Once I got into the general area of gay life, I discovered something . . . being gay . . . I got emotionally involved with the subjects.

One day a friend said, "Where does the average guy go when he wants to get a blow job?" I said, "Well . . . I

think it's the tea room." He said, "that's what you ought to research." Well, there was no literature on tea rooms . . . So here was my commission . . . the nice thing about my study of tea rooms is that I'm not really attracted to impersonal sex . . . here is something I could study without getting sexually involved and I had the funding to study, and a really interesting topic.

J.R.D.: Are there differences in the Gay Movement from city to city?

L.H.: If you take the major cities, you find a large degree of similarity. You don't find much difference in terms of the nature of the gay community . . . the gay world. But in the Movement, I find a good bit of difference. The Movement is more radical in New York . . . the East Coast in general than you find in L.A. Among men there is not nearly as much of a strong radical wing on the West Coast as there is in the East. In terms of women that is the cutting edge of the really radical gay movement.

I find generally a gradual weakening of the leftist part of the movement.

What I find in general, then is really the only viable functioning groups that have real impact on the West Coast . . . are gay student groups, (but these groups vary in effectiveness).

Some of the early goals of the movement are still being worked out.

What happens is when you have an issue develop . . . there are enough people who have been trained in the activist groups and have had their consciousness raised, so that you can turn up masses of people. So, to my mind the movement is still there, but . . . not in its organized way.

J.R.D.: There is a division I've noticed, in several cities



along the lines of the "prudes" and the "non-prudes." There are some gay people who don't approve of tearoom activity or the baths and they castigate the people who participate in those activities. Do you see this division all over?

L.H.: Yes, all over and I think it is always going to be with us. Irving Goffman said some years ago that stigmatized groups always tend to reject and stigmatize those persons who give the group a bad name. It's the rejections by the rejected-

I've had two publishers who have refused to bring out a paperback edition of *Tearoom Trade*. I was given the word from the inside that the guy who had to make the editorial decision was gay, and felt that telling the world what was going on in tearooms would hurt the movement. I think that this is simply a social reality that we face. The people who give a "bad name" are rejected . . . The blacks have gone through this. The whole idea is that if you take on an aura of respectability then no one is going to give you a problem. I'll tell you who answers this almost better than anyone else . . . John Rechy, author of *City of Night*, *The Sexual Outlaws*, etc. John's belief is that the real revolutionary, the sexual revolutionaries are the street hustlers and the drag queens and to a lesser extent perhaps the tearoom people . . . every time they step foot on the street they're saying "Fuck you" to a sexist society. And I think . . . they're not going to go away. They're beautiful. If we are really going to get into the liberation of people from sex role stereotypes then we've got to realize gender-fuck and drag queens are important . . .

J.R.D.: A lot of people in the movement are going into regular political channels. What do you think of this development and do you think there is any hope for a gay plank in the Democratic Platform of 1980?

L.H.: Yes, I'd be real surprised if there weren't. I think the open political activity is another aspect of what has happened with . . . the movement. It is with us and it's probably increasingly with us, and it is healthy. I don't expect it to change the world . . . because I don't have much faith in the party system or normal political systems to really affect social change. I have much more belief that people's heads get changed when an athlete comes out and announces he is gay or a professor says so and of course if a politician says so, that helps, too. But as far as the political process, I've always said that legal change is great . . . but that legal change is not really social change . . . it's only symbolic of social change.

J.R.D.: Are you writing anything now?

L.H.: I'm beginning to work on a study of gay homicide victims. I'm trying to find out if gays are disproportionately murdered and if so why. It's really a part of study of homophobia. But I don't see it being published for five years yet.

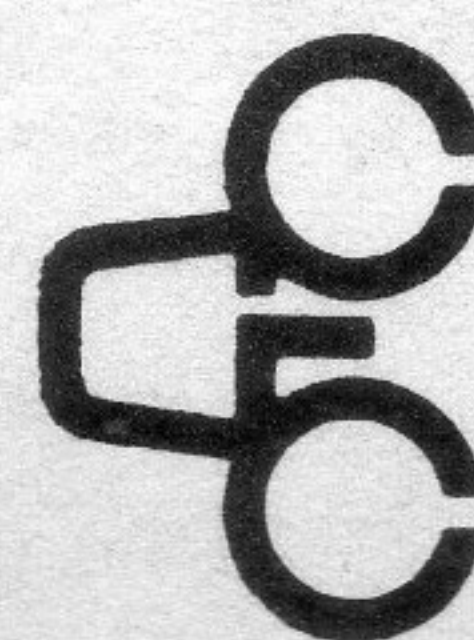
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MAY 8 9 10	"RYAN'S DAUGHTER" (1970) 2:15 5:30 8:45	MAY 11 12 13 14	"THE BIG COUNTRY" (1958) 2:30 5:30 8:30
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PART II

Academy Award Winners, Nominees,
and Overlooked Films



JANIS IAN BETWEEN SETS

An Interview With Janis Ian By Tommi Avicoli

From the beginning, Janis Ian was an innovator. Her first hit, "SOCIETY'S CHILD," concerned an interracial couple, and hit America at a vulnerable time: two years after the 1964 Civil Rights Act and years before interracial coupling would become passe. In 1966, the sixteen year old Ian was the center of national attention—not only did Leonard Bernstein give her a solid plug, but her talents brought raves from the growing numbers of discontented youths who found Vietnam, capitalism, and parents equally difficult to understand. Janis sang to them—to the sons and daughters of affluence who suffered from neglect and boredom ("JANEY'S BLUE"), and to the new emerging folk heroes ("NEW CHRIST CARDIAC HERO"), and to the socially conscious young people who felt for the plight of the old, the lonely, and the confused. She was the voice of a whole generation.

But the fame didn't last—as soon as the controversy wore thin, and a couple of albums later, Janis Ian was a collector's item, loved by a small devout following. On her second LP ("FOR ALL THE SEASONS OF YOUR MIND" Verve) Ian did what has to be considered one of the first positive gay songs—"QUEEN MERKA AND ME." In the song, two gay men walk near Lincoln Center Fountain in New York, holding hands and declaring quite proudly, "Our love is not wrong."

The brash songwriter then retired for two years, and returned with "STARS" (Columbia), an LP which put her back in the running for super-stardom.

"STARS" was followed by three more successful LP's, the most recent of which is "MIRACLE ROW" (Columbia)

I spoke with Janis Ian at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia in April. Photographer Michael Humphrey and I waited for Ms. Ian in one of the small makeup and dressing rooms in the backstage area of the theatre. When she arrived, we were overwhelmed by the warmth and openness of this vivacious woman. It was a confirmation of the personality that comes across on record—the sometimes angry but always sharply perceptive voice.

TA: How do you react to the press labeling you the "Queen of Loneliness?"

Jl: Do they label me that way? I don't care. It doesn't matter what they label me, does it? I don't think the kids care . . . It doesn't really matter, I don't pay any attention to it. I stopped reading reviews . . . You can't trust them. Everybody's got something that they want you to become that you're not becoming and then they get mad at you for not becoming it so they lay into you in print. You lay back at them, and then everybody hates everybody.

TA: What was it like to be sixteen and have a controversial hit single?

Jl: It was weird . . . It was a very insulating experience.

TA: In what way?

Jl: I didn't understand what was happening, at all. And because I didn't understand it I was very insulated from a lot of reality that I shouldn't have been insulated from. Somebody should have sat me down and told me the facts of life . . .

TA: Do you think you would NOT have recorded "SOCIETY'S CHILD" then?

Jl: Oh no! I always record what I want, regardless. It would have been nice to know about it up ahead. I didn't think people would react that way.

TA: What about the song "QUEEN MERKA AND ME?"

Jl: I don't really remember . . . I wrote it by the Lincoln Center Fountain. The sailors from Amsterdam had come in . . .

TA: Last year in the Village Voice you sort of came out as bisexual—

Jl: Sort of?

TA: You DID come out. Was it a shock to people? How did they react?

Jl: I don't know. It wasn't a shock to anyone that I knew well . . . Cliff (the Voice writer who interviewed her) just



put me in a weird position . . . He kind of took it out of context, y'know . . . It was only about twenty minutes out of six hours. He's been asking me to forgive him ever since. He came up to me at this party and started begging . . . But I mean I don't care. I haven't had any real flack about it.

I made Playboy . . . first time . . . I try not to capitalize on it. (Being bisexual) A lot of people are going around saying (makes sound like explosion—WHAM) here I am, and not really doing shit.

TA: You have a large gay following.

Jl: That's good.

TA: Are you aware of it?

Jl: Sure . . . There's no one else talking . . . There's not a lot of people willing to deal with it day to day. Most of them . . . like to say Oh yes, I used to sleep with women long time ago—LONG time ago. And it's like bullshit. So I would hope so. I have a lot of old ladies, too.

TA: You tend to write songs about things that are "controversial" like the S/M song?

Jl: "THIS MUST BE WRONG"?

TA: There's no heavy social commentary in it?

Jl: It's about the Anvil (West Village S/M bar)

TA: What about "ROSES?" Some women I know seem to think it's a lesbian song.

Jl: It's just about a divorce . . . I'm sorry . . . but that's all right, they can make it what they want.

TA: What about politics?

Jl: I don't think there's a whole lot to be done at this point. I'm ready to see just how much Carter's gonna fuck up . . . I like the fact that he made all those mistakes . . . I don't know, I give a lot of money . . . (but) singing messages, I don't really believe in preaching.

TA: What's Janis really like—I mean, Janis the person?

Jl: Just the same as I am on stage.

TA: Do you brush your teeth twice a day?

- Jl: Sometimes. I dental floss every other day. (laughs) . . . I put on stage makeup when I have to . . . I dress like this . . .
- TA: What about being a woman in the business that's pretty heavily male? Joan Baez has some heavy things to say about it.
- Jl: I'm sure she does. Joan's really a good talker. Take what she said . . . I'll go along with whatever she said . . . I don't really have a problem . . . I have a lady manager, a lady lawyer, a male accountant, a male tour manager, and a lady road manager . . . I'm pretty evenly balanced.
- TA: How do you deal with people who call the whole bisexual thing a copout?
- Jl: I don't give a fuck. I know that's putting it harshly . . . I can't believe that when you're born, your body says you will only love this way. I just can't believe that. If I was gay, I'd say I was gay, if I was straight, I'd say I was straight . . . No one's ever really accused me of being a copout.
- TA: I wasn't thinking specifically of you, but people have accused Bowie, for instance, of being a copout?
- Jl: Oh we're allowed. I mean we're allowed to go with whoever we want. If somebody is so strict that they can only see one side of humanity, it's their bind. I think somebody like Bowie or Elton (John) have people thrown at them continually, y'know male and female—every sort of sexuality thrown at them every night.
- TA: It was a courageous thing you did—coming out.
- Jl: It wasn't. I mean it really wasn't, y'know, to be courageous . . . Barbara Gittings is courageous, Sidney Abbott is courageous. I trust them (the public) and I've always trusted them . . . Hopefully it'll just open up that much more for some of those nine year olds . . . let them fantasize . . . they do it anyway. I don't think it was courageous. You have to understand, I had no choice . . . I was in a position where I was either going to lie to myself and embarrass myself to myself or I was going to tell the truth . . . Had it been up to me, I would have picked the New York Times. It's not really a question of courage . . . courage is (pause) I don't know what courage is, but it's not what I've got.
- TA: Are you bitter about the music business?
- Jl: I was for a while.
- TA: Were you bitter about being on top one day and on the bottom the next?
- Jl: No, I wasn't bitter about falling down, it's just the shit they put you through . . . it really comes down to . . . nobody tells the truth in this business . . . even the artists are full of shit . . . every artist has his own number that he's pushing. It's like any other business except it looks so much more glamorous that you don't expect it . . . you have so many more heroes in this business.
- TA: What is your philosophy of life?
- Jl: What's my philosophy of life?
- TA: What guiding principles do you follow?
- Jl: I would like to just live the way I wanna live and let everyone else live the way they wanna live . . . ●

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THE MYTH OF PEDOPHILIA

By Chuck Lyons

Our social environment is turbulent on the issue of giving homosexuality a place as a normal social expression. National opinions documented in "Public Attitudes toward homosexuality: Part of the 1970 National Survey by the Institute for Sex Research," *Journal of Homosexuality*, Fall 1974, indicate negative perceptions of homosexuality and homosexuals. The notions that homosexuality is immoral, obscene and vulgar are not rare today, despite the increased visibility of bi-sexuals and homosexuals. Additionally, the opinion that homosexuals are high government security risks, as well as social corrupters and the cause of civilization's downfall, has not vanished, nor some might argue, diminished, over the years.

Therefore it appears clear, at least to me, that even if a survey of public opinion on the subject of homosexuality was to show a liberalization in attitudes, we as a society are still far away from embracing homosexuality as a positive social phenomenon. Counter-balancing a reservoir of negative attitudes in the gay liberation movement. Beginning as an attempt to project homosexuality as positive and healthy, it has recently shifted to a struggle for civil rights for gay people.

The recent Supreme Court decision upholding homosexual acts between consenting adults as criminal threatens the precinct of privacy and personal

prerogative. As a result of this position, the casual observer can certainly note that the vogue days of homosexual chic, prevalent in the last two or three years, is coming to a close. For homosexuals, this new or reinstated position of social censure of homosexuality and homosexuals has increasingly forced those who choose to live as homosexuals to adopt a defensive if not confrontatory stance. One of the costly results of the adversary-defense relationship engulfing homosexual expressiveness is that every admitted bi-sexual and homosexual, in becoming a member of the gay community, is reduced to being a soldier in the war for liberation.

Without question, the most scathing attack on homosexuality is based upon the accusation that homosexuals are child molesters. This charge goes beyond the criticism of homosexuals as setting wrong or bad models for presumably heterosexual children; it refers to the attack upon the personhood of the individual child. Molestation is not only condemned because it may produce physical and/or psychological damage in the child, but because it is also coercive of what is largely regarded as a personal affair: one's sex life. Since child molesting is a crime, it makes most homosexuals criminals, either real or as fancied in the minds of society at large or the personal fears of some homosexuals themselves. A very important point to

mention here is that the accumulated research on child molesting shows no evidence that it is connected with homosexuality, except with the same randomness and infrequency as for heterosexuals.

Beyond the fact that the population of child molesters is small proportionate to the general population, homosexuals are no more prone (some evidence shows less prone) to molest a child than their heterosexual counterparts. While I agree that forcible sex is a contemptible offense, I am not satisfied that "forcing a child to have sex with an adult" is an adequate analysis of child molestation. More directly, I want to deal with the issues of sexuality which are largely assumed and unexplored in the case of child molestation and in particular with the homosexual encounter between adult and child—which is often regarded as a case of molestation.

As I have already mentioned, one of the principle weaknesses of the indictment of homosexual adult-child encounters is the low incidence and probability of occurrence. The second is that pedophilia is in fact not child molestation. Pedophilia is a term which is currently used to mean: a morbid interest in children; an expressed desire for immature sexual gratification with a prepubertal child; sexual attraction to physically immature children of the same or opposite sex; and a variant of homosexual behavior. These usages are manifestations of our cultural perversions of the word. Like pederasty, pedophilia originally described a love relationship between an adult and a child. The fact that this relationship took on masculine connotations was probably a function of male chauvinism in Greek society at the time. The corrupted use of pedophilia, and even worse—pederasty, clouds the most important issue of adult-child sexual relations, namely a love for children. Whether you wish to call this love paternalism, maternalism, affection etc., there are people who genuinely adore children because they are children.

Beyond the fact that homosexuals are not the principal molesters of children; in the case of child-adult relationships, what is the source of the public outrage against this experience? In two words, child sexuality. Without exception, children are seen as the victims of adult-child sex. Overlooked are the possibilities of provocation, seduction and gratification (sexual) on the part of the child. This is not to say that children involved are always or usually instigators of these liaisons, that the adults involved are not responsible for their behavior, or that children generally enjoy the experience. It is meant to say that, particularly in the cases of "homosexual pedophilia" where the average age of the child falls between 12 and 15 years old (somewhat higher than the age of heterosexual pedophilia—perhaps because of the low incidence of getting caught with this age group), the possibility of child sexuality cannot be discounted. Thus



there is some degree of sexual expression which is consciously acknowledged as being explored by many children through their participation.

The self consciousness which many gays carry with them in their dealings with children and adolescents is rooted in the internalized fear of or defense against the charge of criminal pedophilia, as well as the still current and obvious accent upon youth which the country as a whole espouses and which is readily acknowledged in homosexual relationships. Many if not most sexual relationships, both gay and straight, are based upon one partner being physically attractive to the other, if not both to each other.

What determines physical attractiveness is, I believe, still connected with youthful appearances, but not what some would call immature or juvenile physical features. Gays who work around children, finding themselves emotionally or physically attracted to a child, as well as

continued on page 25

BLACK LESBIANS:

A Diagram In Words By Cynthia Cauthern

Most of us would agree that Black Lesbians are the most oppressed group of people in the society. The Black Woman who is gay is forced, by the white-male-homophobic society, to exist within a maelstrom because of her Blackness, Womaness, and Gayness. This three fold oppression is facilitated by the dominant white society, but is maintained and perpetuated by the Black community.

The oppression of Black Women begins with the white concept of a woman's role in society. Since the Black community does not have power in the mass media and lacks the strength and solidarity to formulate its own concepts, it has mimicked and exaggerated those of the white society. Thus, women were contained in the home and became lackeys to their husbands and children. A female was not defined as a woman if she was not possessed by husband, home, and children. The black community choose to force these restrictions on Black Women. Any variation on this concept is not acceptable. Women who do not conform are labeled queers and are ostricized from the community.

Many Black Families are matriarcial: the Woman performs the societal roles of mother and father. Many black male and Black Women are threatened by the Black Matriarch. Some Black males contend that dominant society has made it impossible for them to assert their manhood by denying them education, employment and the ability to take care of their families. Black women are thereby perceived as an ally of the dominant white society because they are seen as surpressing black males by assuming basic familial survival responsibilities. Black women who are forced or choose to be matriarchs are labeled men, butches, and studs. The sexual preference of these women has little to do with these labels, which stem from roles they have been forced to portray.

The black community will label any woman performing non-female roles as a lesbian. Overt sexual expression has little to do with this label, although it is a key factor to erase it. Since black males and black women share the same economic level, in essence they both must work to survive. Black males can not financially manipulate them to perform socially approved house wifely roles. Thus, black males have sought another vehicle to control black women. Heterosexual intercourse is a tool which males use to express their dominance over women. The black community also uses heterosexual intercourse as a tool for black males to assert their dominance over black women. This is the only role in which white society has let black males achieve equality with

white males. The sexual exploitation of the black woman's body and the willingness of black women to be subjected to this abuse allows her to fulfill the societal roles of a woman by supporting her husband through his ego development.

The uses of heterosexual intercourse and its role with the black male ego gives us some insight into the substance of homophobia in the black community, especially toward black lesbians.

Women who deny Black males the right to build and satisfy their egos by the sexual abuse of the female body are labelled butches, and bull-dykes, are seen as freaks and are cast out of the Black Community.

Black Lesbians are a threat to the white-mimicking Black community. These Black Women weaken the already wobbly pillars of Black society and the Black male. Like most Black Women, Black Lesbians do not need Black males for financial support, but she also rejects his affectional/emotional support and denies him the right to manipulate her through sexual involvement. Thus Black Lesbians do not need Black males and are therefore not recognized as women. She becomes a female who became a man, but never a woman who loves women.

Homophobia is thriving in the Black community. Until Black people analyze their community and its needs, and establish a concept which will allow Black people to be responsible for their own destiny, Black Gays will never be free to break the chains which bind their closets.

There is no Black gay community where Black Lesbians and Black males can give support to each other. The Black community is ignorant of the natural process of becoming gay. The pro-gay media by-passed the Black community, thus Freudian theories still explain homosexuality in the Black community.

Often the pressures are too intense for Black gays in their community, so they flee to the white gay community. Association with white gays means continually fighting racism and sexism.

The Black community must get pro-gay education into the community. Black Lesbians and gay males who rejected the community must return their skills to it. Peer counselling and consciousness raising is desparately needed. Black gays have the opportunity to seize the leadership in the stagnant Black Liberation Movement; which would bring about freedom for Black Men, Black Women and gay people. ●

Drawing by Emery Robinson



EXCERPTS FROM A LIFE

By Rich Grzesiak

December 12, 1973

Reactions from my parents over my admission of homosexuality continue to be irrational. Mother is a clinical depression case and father regards me with the same disgust as I him. Amazing how hate can so parallel itself—on different levels, yet the same loathesome reason. Met a gay tonight who while admitting his homosexual feelings is engaged to be married (a girl, of course). I thought I had problems. He's very handsome and seems to think (no, believe, almost as an article of faith) that his fiancée will accept a meang-a-trois with vertiable equanimity. What troubles bisexuality brings! This same guy (rather handsome, Jewish) will continue, he says, his relationship with a male lover with the unexpressed hope his wife will not find out. I feel I'm describing Peyton Place and not an actual incident. I wished him lots of luck, explaining why I thought he'd need it, and parted, smiling at his blue bright eyes.

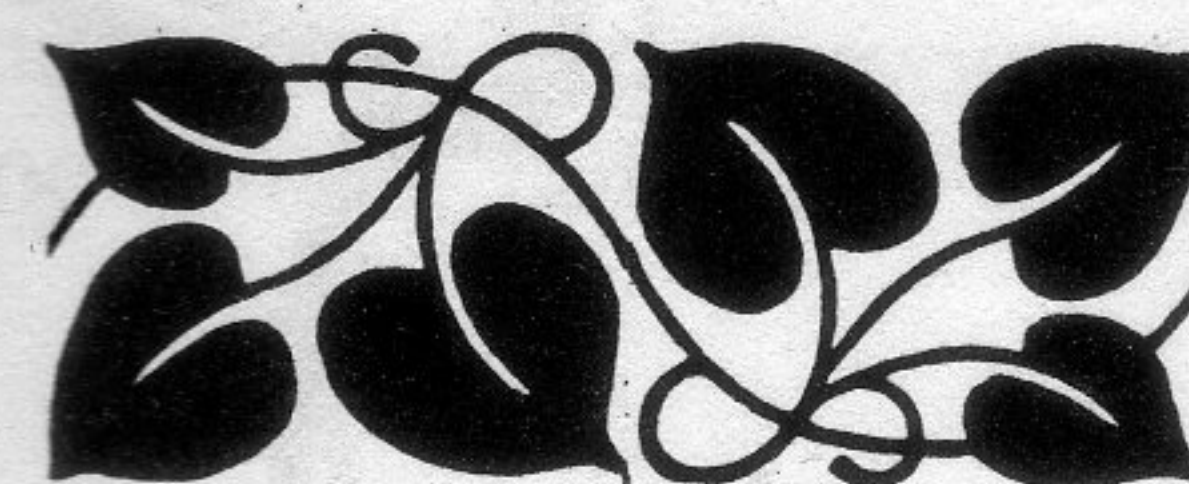


December 22, 1973

I was talking to my Uncle W. at Uncle J.'s wake last night. He seems to be waiting to bait me about my homosexuality, Vidal, leaving home, not to mention my espousal of the usual bleeding heart liberal causes. But for some odd reason he lacks the guts to do so in a public place. I suppose if I ever really get to him with some remark or other he will blurt an unseemly response. He envies me my freedom (or relative freedom; to quote from a conversation we had last August, "If I had to do it all over again I would not have kids, i.e., get married"). I envy him his comfortable affluence for he's made

it, and the rest of our family has not. He speaks of going to Puerto Rico like I refer to my trips to New York City—with an ease that I find perfectly offensive. He doesn't realize he's doing this though, so what can you accuse him of?

My father to me at the table after the funeral Mass and burial were completed: "You are the only male who presently carries the last name of GRZESIAK. You know how your mother prays you will continue it." I smiled serenely.



December 25, 1973

Ah, what an unending pleasure Christmas Eve 1973 was! I met a gorgeous hunk out on the Spruce Street merry-go-round and we covered it all, from Nixon to Naphrodite.

Line from THREE COINS IN THE FOUNTAIN, a 1934 Hollywood epic I saw tonight: "My new novel is not only magnificent, it's wonderful too." I want to reach out and touch some other human being, love them, not dominate them, and I suppose be disillusioned once again by all the old clichés about love. The need to cling . . . I see no one and talk to no one for weeks (more like days) and I cannot relate to them without becoming neurotically possessive. Why am I attracted to older people? Why is it people of my own age I always get along with worse?

Nelson Eddy: "Ah, sweet mystery of life . . ."

Greta Garbo: "I want to be alone . . ."

Beatles: "I want to hold your hand . . ."

R.A.G. I

January 3, 1974

I am at my godfather's (who, for libel's purposes shall remain nameless). My cousins J. and C. are talking animatedly while I gaze intently at the fireplace. They think I am entirely oblivious to everything they're saying (try NOT listening to something very hard and you'll probably hear it all the more and better). I turn just as J. stage-whispers into her sister C.'s ear, "He's gay." The two of them just chuckled as if they had heard a good joke (better than outrage I suppose—such is the nature of social progress on this all too delicate issue). I join along with them. "Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!" For all the world to see it was a joyous laugh but inside I was thinking, you two little twerps, I just hope you'll get yours in due time too. Needless to say, I did my best to make C. feel uncomfortable during the rest of the evening (e.g., "C., don't shit me, we're not children; you and I know the girls can let the locker room talk file by just as luridly as the guys." Reaction: blushed, emphatic "No, no" followed with little amplification of why she felt that way.)

Aunt W. to the girls in the rec room: "Well, girls, how are the boys in your life?" Giggles, half-answers. Then to me: "Well, Richie, how about you?" Reply: "My perversity is well known." (Or something to that effect, as it's hazy in my mind). W. is a nice fascist, though. She invited me to her home (does she invite everybody?) and kissed me twice later in the evening, even though she called Kissinger, that pillar of the right wing in this country, "that commie professor." I told her in a polite way she didn't know what the hell she was talking about. She sneered, I nodded. What fun!



May 29, 1974

I am a fool. A stupid, unmitigated, interminably uneducable fool. And what is even stupider is that I continue to feel that I am trapped and there is absolutely nothing I can do about it. Which is damn false and I should know it. What is the cause for all this soul searching? Well, to be frank, due to my own outright stupidly I am for all practical purposes now a recluse. And this didn't have to be at all. The only way out of this morass is through philosophy . . .

My problem can be stated along these lines . . . I was raised as an extremely conservative Roman Catholic. All well and good, you may say. Yet I am a homosexual and thus extremely given to radical and leftist feelings and beliefs. Problem: how to reconcile the two on a compatible basis. Answer: imponderable. I do not know how to build a successful personality on the basis of conservative personal habits merged with radical/leftist friends and realities. The blending is schizophrenic to say the least . . .

So what is there now, diary? Tell me if you can see enough into the future to predict how one very uptight yet talented homosexual finds himself . . . do you know or is it too much to tell?

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those who like to work very interpersonally with children, can become easily self-conscious of their role in the relationship and begin to stifle further expressions of interest or involvement rather than run the risk of being involved in a pedophiliac relationship.

There are many difficulties involved here. A person must stifle or discontinue what was becoming a warm and meaningful relationship (whether or not it was sexual) between adult and child. In doing so the homosexual adult helps to perpetuate the very oppression of sexual expression and human warmth in homosexuals which is a function of heterosexism. Not only is the gay adult oppressed but the child as well, by being subjected to a dysfunctional policy for sexual and gender development. It is bitterly ironic that gay people would serve such an instrumental purpose. Another difficulty is found in the homosexually inclined or determined child or adolescent seeking adult contact for morale support or sexual gratification. Finally, the fear of pedophilia prevents homosexuals and heterosexuals alike from seeking or receiving gratification, either emotional or sexual, from the social environment of which they are a part. We never seem to outgrow our fear of pedophilia. We are afraid of it whether we are attracted to children sexually or not. We are afraid that someone will think we are pedophiliacs, and we carry it with us in the notion that even homosexual acts between two consenting adults springs from the coercive or manipulative skills of one of the parties.

I am not a pedophiliac; neither in the criminal or platonic sense of the word. But, I, like many other people, gay and straight, who work with children have been burdened with the defensiveness and personality constraints that pedophilic fears stimulate. I like children very much, and I have enjoyed working with children and adolescents in a variety of settings over the past ten years. In the last six years or so I have become conscious of gradually being constrained by the codes of professional conduct on my own self-consciousness to substituting a professional role for my own personality when dealing with children individually or in groups. Becoming aware of a fear of pedophilia as the cause of my narrowed expression of personality and my limitations in seeking and receiving satisfying interpersonal contact with other males (and in some cases females), and its fallacious operation in my life, I am upset.

I find myself a victim of socially agreed upon and operative confusion. No one has ever fully explored and explained the dynamics of pedophilia in either the criminal or platonic sense. Furthermore, while I cannot say that I could never be a pedophiliac in either the criminal or platonic sense, I know that I am not one now. Why then am I constrained to behave as if I could

be guilty? I am not eager to be a soldier, particularly as it regards expressing my sexuality and social-sexual behavior. Nor do I believe that it is fitting that a community should be held together solely for the defense of its members and its beliefs. As a new-comer to the phenomenon of community, the gay populations of America's cities have not fully explored as have ethnic communities such as Blacks, Italians, etc., alternative and non-defense ridden ways of enjoying themselves as a community. I wonder if it is too extreme to describe the gay community as a garrison, and I wonder if it is too hopeful to expect that to change.

I cannot help but believe that it is the fear of criminal and platonic pedophilia which is sexism's most effective weapon in oppressing homosexuals as well as in marshalling forces for oppression. Because of this fear, and not due to any act or inclination on my part, I act as a tool in my own sexual oppression. But I am not alone in this, the vast majority regardless of sexual orientation do the same things to themselves as well as others. Because of the fear, people act as watchdogs on themselves and act defensively towards others. Sexuality has not only been stifled, but turned around as a defense mechanism instead of a liberating experience. Human interpersonal dialogue has suffered as well, not only between children and adults, but between adults themselves. But instead of losing oneself in frustration, I think we can attack the problem at hand.

Among my prescriptions for a healthier attitude in human sexual expression, the first should be a thorough analysis of pedophilia both as a crime and a platonic expression of affection/devotion. While this may have little or no effect upon the legal definition of consenting partners in sex acts or serve to better focus the responsibilities of sexual liaisons between children and adults, it will at least acknowledge that child sexuality is a very real and important dynamic to consider in these cases. Our attitudes concerning child sexuality will have to change if we are to remove the fear which haunts us as a result of our belief in the sexual destruction of children as the only outcome of child-adult encounters.

Let me make it clear here that I agree that pedophilia is a crime, however I would qualify its criminal appearance by pointing to the presence of violence, brutality and coercion as opposed to persuasion, and the child's negative reactions to the liaison. I can already envision the legal and social difficulties in determining these elements, but I think it is necessary to confront what the act meant to the child or in terms of the child's sexuality. At the very least, more must be done in the way of educating us to the functionings of childhood sexuality. More research into the dynamics and the control of criminal pedophilia should be done. We are only as healthy and sound as our bases for social sanctions and censures define us. Let us hope that we will no longer be governed by irrational, unfounded and misunderstood fears. ●

**COMING OUT IN PROVIDENCE,
A Review by
Joseph R. DeMarco**

Hubert Kennedy, a Professor at Providence College and a gay activist, recounts in wonderful detail his process of coming out in his recently-published work.

The volume, privately printed, is small but is packed with information. Not only is this the story of Mr. Kennedy's coming out, but the book also details the story of the first gay pride march in Providence, Rhode Island. This march in Providence is all the more significant because it and surrounding events, entitled the Congress of People with Gay Concerns, became an official Bicentennial event in Rhode Island.

The book is short, a mere 31 pages, but it contains more details than one can find in some larger works. Kennedy takes us from his earliest attempts at coming out (which occurred in Germany) to his full-fledged participation in the Providence, Rhode Island Gay Pride events.

His story is not totally unique — but because of that, it is the story of a great many people. Reading it will remind many of the events of their own coming out.

In a sense, Mr. Kennedy's narrative is inspiring. It is nothing new for a person to "come out" and risk job, friends, and comfort. But, Hubert Kennedy began his quest for a more honest life at the age of 43.

As Kennedy reveals in the book, it was neither easy nor totally pleasant for him to come out in his college community, although the student body was supportive, the administration was a source of difficulty. In an attempt to curb the rights of free speech and expression, the Administration of Providence College, threatened Mr. Kennedy with breach of contract should he continue to advocate homosexuality.

A good portion of the book deals with the efforts of Rev. J. Gilbert of the Providence MCC to have the Congress of People with Gay Concerns declared an official Bicentennial event in Rhode Island. Much factual information is included in this section.

Coming out in Providence is a book that is well worth reading. It is quite detailed for those who enjoy historical accuracy; it is also an inspiring account of one person's courage in the face of homophobia. We all face homophobia in one way or another each day, and knowing that there are some who have the courage to defy it can help all of us.

Kennedy says, "Made to feel isolated and different, gay people have accepted and internalized prevailing attitudes of society. We have come to feel inferior and to accept oppression as just. But it does no good to plead for tolerance; we must liberate ourselves."

And such is what Hubert Kennedy set out to do for himself - and for all of us. ●

Coming Out in Providence is available for \$2.00 from: Hubert Kennedy 33 Huxley Avenue Providence R.I. 02908

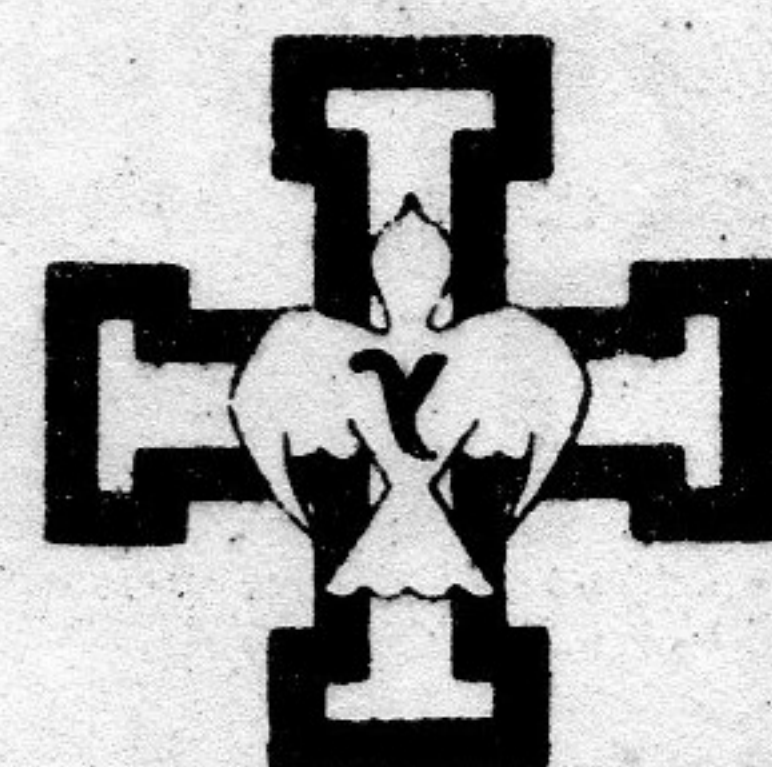


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WHAT'S YO

Sex Roles In Relationships

In a successful relationship, both persons must be happy and it appears that happiness revolves around COMPANIONSHIP and WHO DOES WHAT. Who does what usually involves four specific areas: finances, social activities, household tasks, and SEXUAL ACTIVITIES. Who does what in happy relationships is usually based on preferences and may even change or reverse during the relationship. In unhappy relationships, who does what is usually fixed or assumed. This does not mean that if roles are fixed or assumed all relationships will be unhappy, however, it is more likely that if what is done is willingly chosen by each partner the chances of the relationship being happier are greater.

Fixed roles usually follow the heterosexual model of dominant-aggressive-masculine role or a passive-submissive-feminine role. The dominant partner is the person who governs or controls the decisions of what is to be done. The passive partner is the one who defers or is obedient to the decisions of the other partner. It is rare in any relationship that one partner is totally dominant or totally passive; trouble occurs in the relationship when there is disagreement over which one makes the decision about who does what.

The two-sex roles in heterosexual society have so dominated our culture that we have also developed the belief that there must be two different roles in a homosexual act. How many times have we heard "which one is the fem?" meaning which one is sexually passive or "on the bottom."

Prior to the 1960's when a male or female acknowledged to themselves and to others that they were gay, they assumed an opposite sex role behavior. Even though that outward role of behavior has been mostly eliminated, have we carried along a subconscious belief that one partner must always be passive or feminine during the sexual act and the other aggressive or masculine? In order to have a relationship, must one partner become sexually passive and the other sexually aggressive? Must we maintain the outdated heterosexual model in gay relationships?

UR ROLE?

By Ken George

One danger of too rigid sex roles is that they may bring about boredom and dissatisfaction and a consequent withdrawal or loss of interest in sex. The dominant partner may feel this boredom less quickly if he or she is the only one to introduce new sexual behavior. However, the dominant partner may begin to complain about always being the one who initiates sex, especially as the more passive partner begins to withdraw or lose interest. At times the dominant partner wants to become more passive but is prevented from this due to the rigid roles that each have accepted and are now afraid to change. When this happens, withdrawal or lack of interest in sex may occur.

Sexual conflict is likely to surface whenever there is some resentment in the amount of control one partner exerts over the other. The dominant-passive issue emerges when a couple stops to think about which one of them initiates sexual activity and determines what is to be done.

Many still believe the "gay myth" that if we are "passive" sexually we are playing the feminine role and if we are "active" we are playing the masculine role. Who is to say that the person on top during sexual relations is more active, dominant, or masculine? Who decided that the person on the bottom is passive or feminine? What difference does it make who is the insertee or the insertor? Or who is on top or who is on the bottom? What is most important is how each person feels about the decision of what is to be done sexually, who initiates the activity, how flexible the pattern is, and how much variety is involved. Each of us is capable of assuming any position according to our momentary preference. We can eliminate the stereotypical view of the heterosexual world that roles are fixed and that one partner must *always* be passive and the other always aggressive. Long term relationships appear to have eliminated the problems associated with playing roles. Who does what sexually may change because rigid roles have been eliminated.

*Ken George is a therapist at Marriage Council and Eromin.

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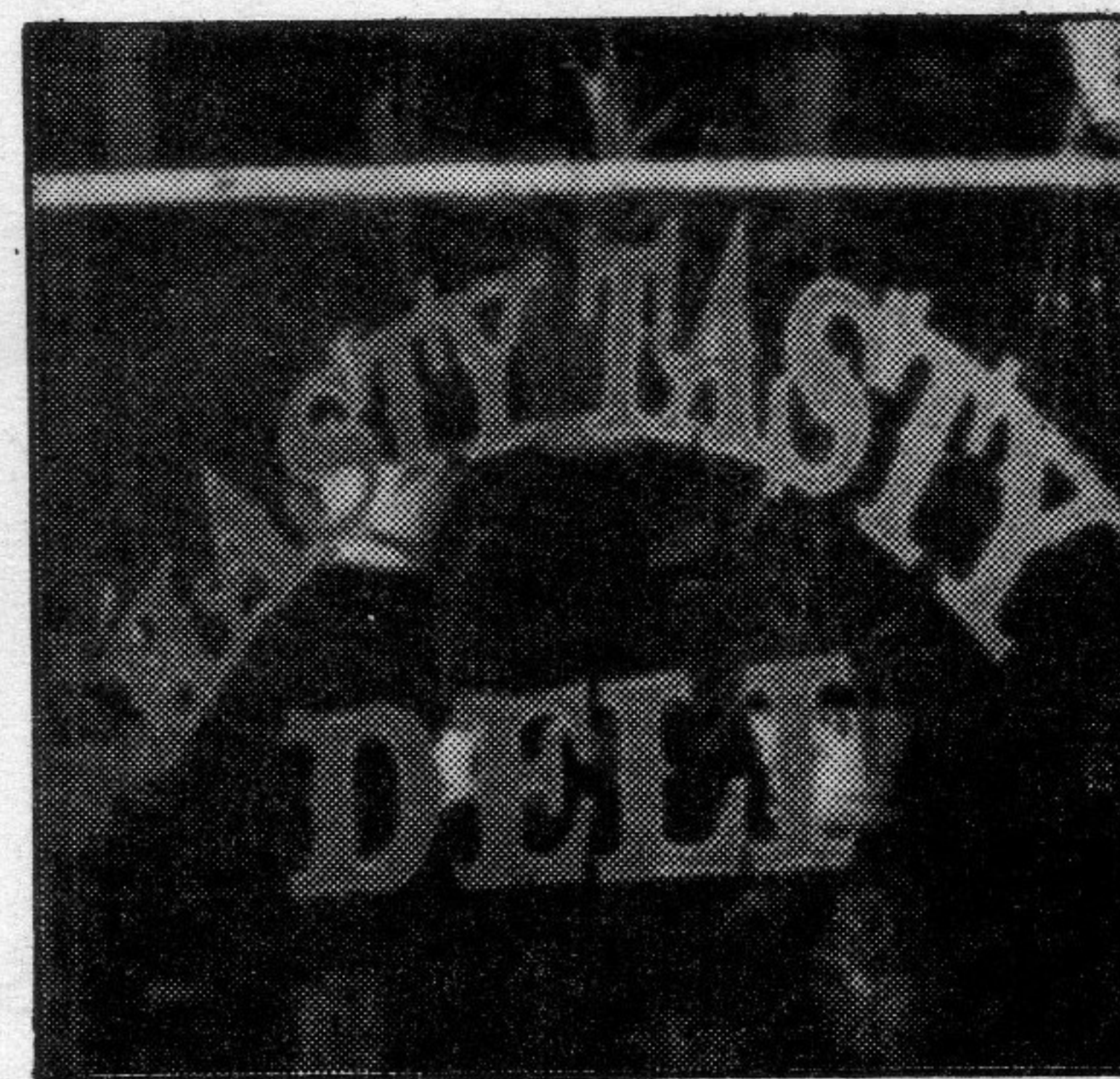
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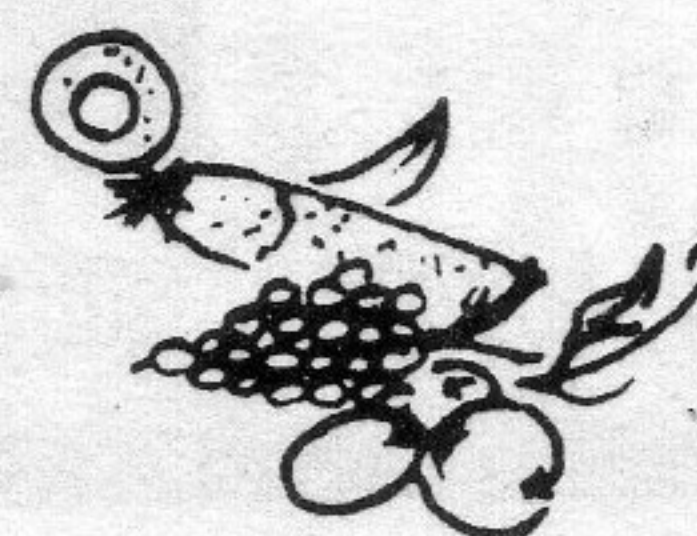
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continued from page 6

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7 PM DIGNITY (GAY CATHOLICS), Trinity Parish House, 2212 Spruce St.
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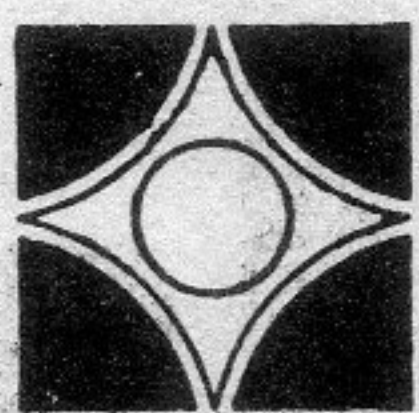
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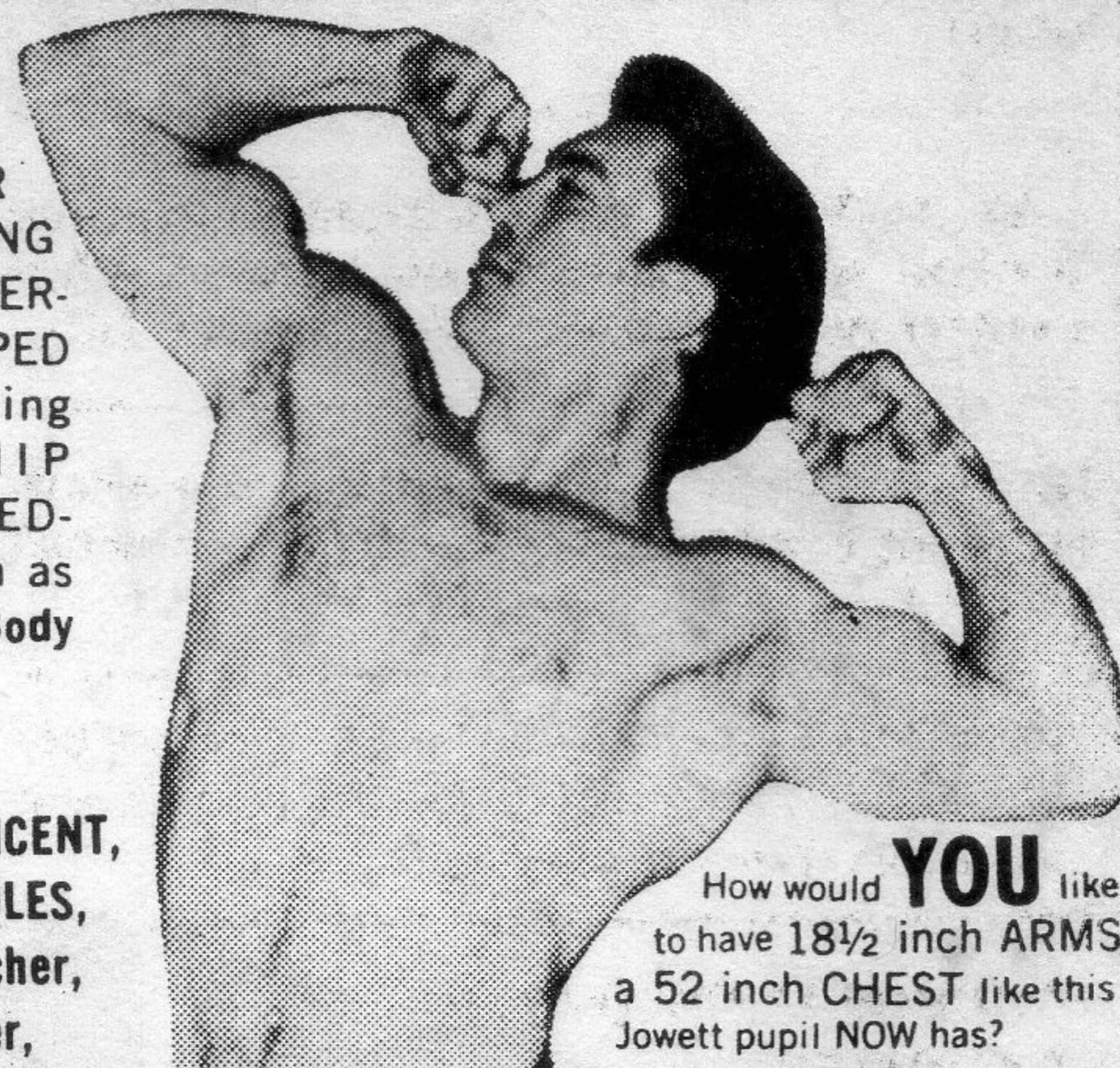


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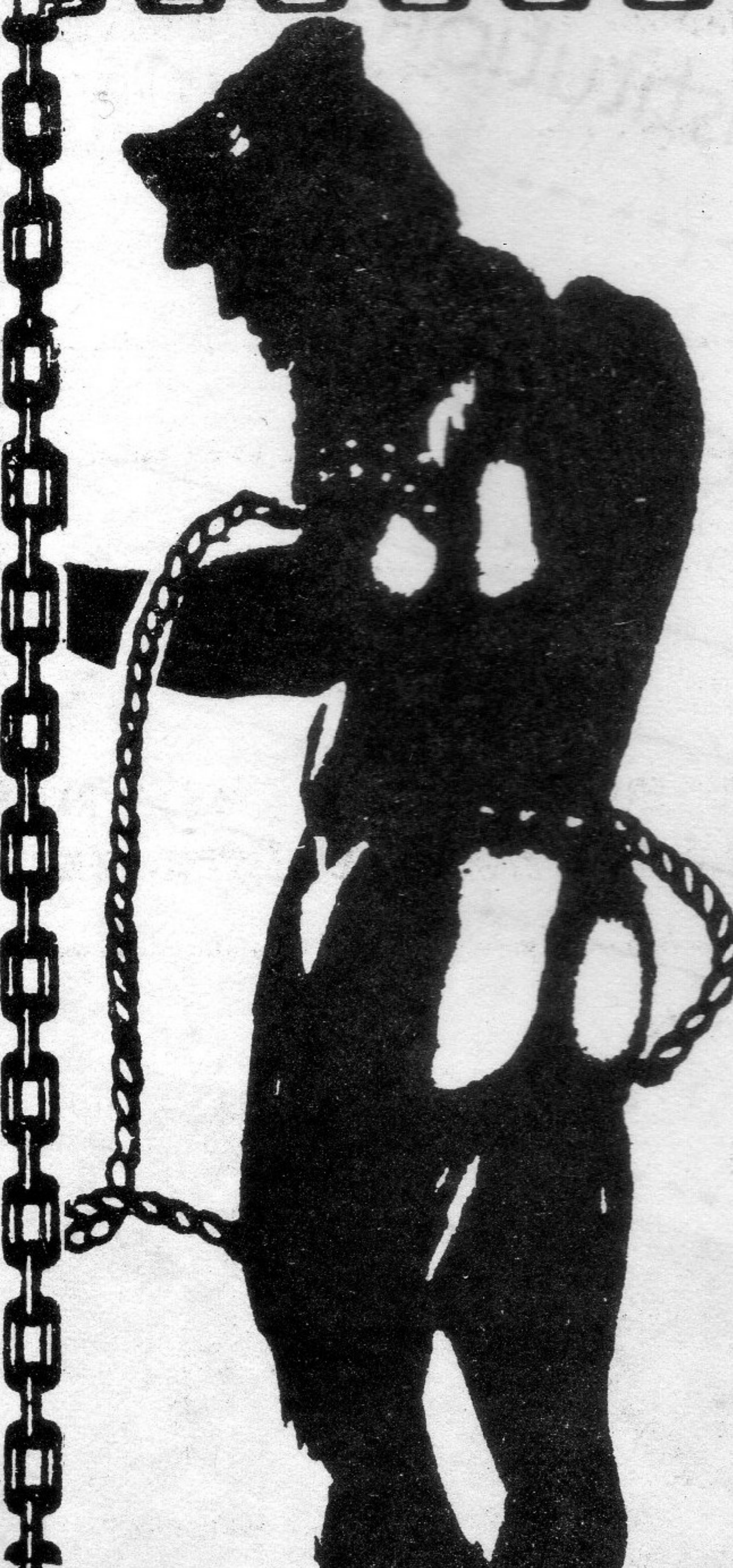
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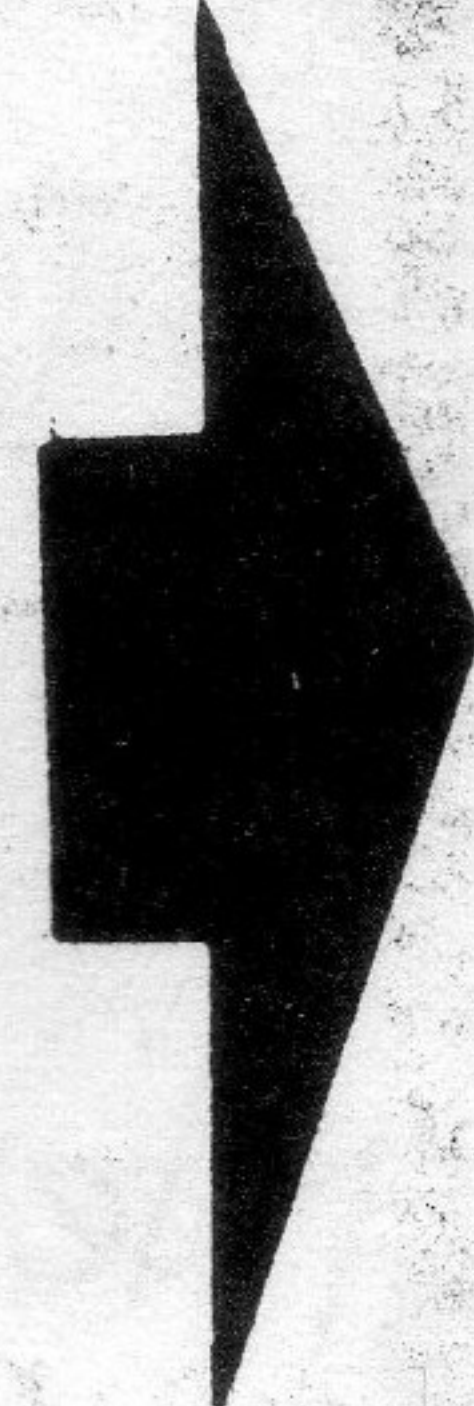
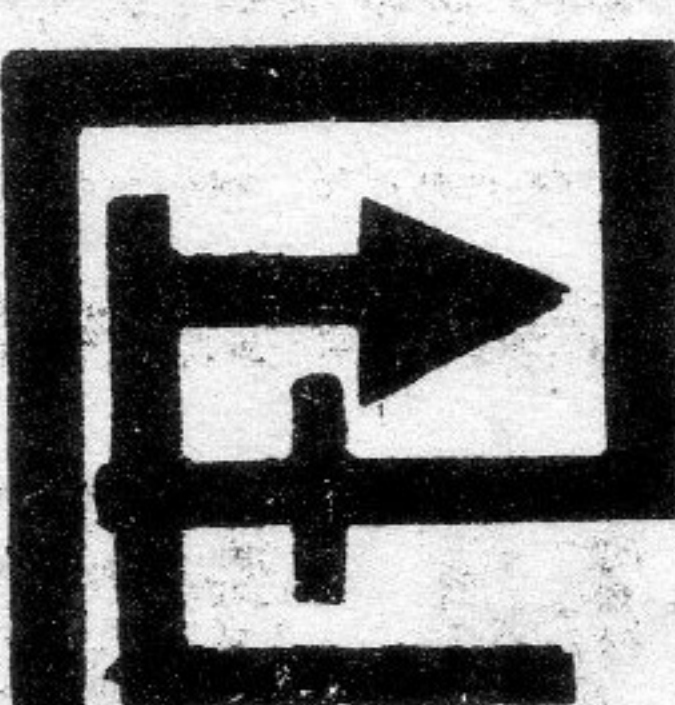
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